

Message Text

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ACTION PM-05

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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

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C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 2265

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS MO

SUBJECT: UTILIZATION OF FMS CREDIT

1. RECENT COMMUNICATION FROM DEPARTMENT SUGGESTS THAT WE URGE GOM TO DECIDE PROMPTLY PURCHASES IT WILL MAKE WITH FY 78 CREDIT MONEY TO PERMIT EARLY SIGNATURE OF LOAN AGREEMENT. HOWEVER, OUR RECENT DEFERRAL OF THE MOROCCAN REQUEST FOR OV-10 AIRCRAFT AND COBRA HELICOPTERS AND OUR DELAYS ON REQUESTS FROM COMMERCIAL FIRMS FOR AUTHORITY TO PROMOTE SALES OF TANKER AIRCRAFT AND ADDITIONAL APC'S LEAVE THE GOM IN DISARRAY AND PERPLEXED OVER WHAT EQUIPMENT WE WOULD APPROVE FOR PURCHASE WITH FY 78 CREDIT.

2. THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE ROYAL MOROCCAN AIR FORCE (RMAF), COL. TERHHAZ, DISCUSSED THIS QUESTION WITH CHIEF, MUSLO ON APRIL 14. HE TALKED ABOUT TWO CURRENT RMAF REQUIREMENTS - THE TWO TANKER AIRCRAFT MENTIONED ABOVE AND A TOW CARRYING HELICOPTER, WHETHER IT BE THE TOW COBRA AH-15 OR THE HUGHES 500 - WHICH ARE CANDIDATES FOR THE FMS 78 CREDIT MONEY.

A. TERHHAZ INDICATED THAT THE TANKER AIRCRAFT WOULD NOT BE USED IN THE SAHARA BUT RATHER TO PROVIDE THE CAPABILITY TO SCRAMBLE THE F-1'S AND KEEP THEM ALOFT IF AN ATTACK ON GOM AIR BASES IS IMMINENT. OTHER POSSIBLE USES DISCUSSED WERE REFUELING COMBAT PATROL AIRCRAFT
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ALONG THE ALGERIAN BORDER AREAS AND FERRYING THE F-1 MIRAGE BACK AND FORTH TO FRANCE FOR MAINTENANCE IN THE EVENT SPANISH OVERFLIGHT IS NOT POSSIBLE.

B. TERHHAZ THEN SAID THAT THE RMAF REQUIREMENT FOR A HELICOPTER WITH A TOW-LIKE WEAPONS SYSTEM COULD BE OBTAINED FROM A THIRD COUNTRY ,
BUT THAT THE RMAF WANTED THE TOW SINCE IT IS A SYSTEM ALREADY INTRO-

DUCED INTO THE ROYAL MOROCCAN ARMY. HE SAID THAT THE TOW HELICOPTER WOULD BE USED AGAINST THE ALGERIAN ARMOR THREAT AND NOT IN THE SAHARA

HE INDICATED THAT THE RMAF ALREADY HAD THE REQUIRED HELICOPTER FORCES IN THE SAHARA TO HANDLE THAT MISSION (AB-205'S FROM ITALY WITH A GERMAN 20MM DOOR GUN).

3. IN PURSUING THE QUESTION OF MOROCCO'S USE OF FY 78 CREDIT, WE NEED THE GUIDANCE THE DEPARTMENT CONSIDERS APPROPRIATE ON THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS: IF GOM GIVES SPECIFIC ASSURANCES THAT A PARTICULAR EQUIPMENT WOULD NOT BE USED IN THE FORMER SPANISH SAHARA OR MAURITANIA, WILL APPROVAL BE GIVEN FOR PURCHASE OF THE ITEM WITH FMS CREDIT? WHAT FORM SHOULD SUCH ASSURANCES TAKE?

4. UNDER ORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES WE WOULD BE CONCERNED THAT DELAY IN SIGNATURE OF LOAN AGREEMENT MIGHT MAKE FUNDS EARMARKED FOR MOROCCO VULNERABLE TO EMERGENCY PROGRAMMING ELSEWHERE. SINCE, HOWEVER, IT IS THE USG WHICH ON SHORT NOTICE RAISED MAJOR PROBLEMS FOR THE GOM WE PRESUME THAT DEPARTMENT WOULD NOT COMPOUND THE POLITICAL FALLOUT OF OUR DECISION BY RENEGING ON THE FULL DOL 45 MILLION FOR MOROCCO. (IN THIS CONNECTION IT IS WORTH RECALLING THAT WE HAVE PORTRAYED VELIOTES' TESTIMONY TO GOM AS RELATED TO AN EFFORT TO SAFEGUARD THE DOL 45 MILLION FOR FY 79.)

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